

THE  
Bishop of L O N D O N's  
C H A R G E  
TO THE  
Clergy of his Diocese  
AT HIS  
VISITATION:

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THE  
Bishop of *London's* Charge  
TO THE  
CLERGY of his Diocess, &c.

BRETHREN,

**I** Have always thought it my Duty upon these solemn Meetings to say something, that might be most proper for your Notice: And I believe there has rarely been a Time that afforded greater Variety of unhappy Circumstances than these we now labour under. For we are divided into so many and such pernicious Principles; that without the gracious Assistance of the Almighty to our utmost Care for the rooting of them out, they will inevitably ruin both Church and State. Obedience, Truth and Sincerity; Quietness, Peace and Love, are no longer the measures of Civil and Religious Behaviour: but a noisie pretence of Liberty, has, with too many, broken both the Tables.

If therefore I entertain you a little longer than ordinary with such Discourse as may call to your  
B minds

minds those good, but forgotten, Rules of former Times, to encounter so universal a Depravation, as we are at present involved in: I hope you will bear with me. For it is absolutely necessary, where ye have so many obstinate Enemies to encounter, that ye muster up all your Forces, and put them in the best posture of Service for all Occasions.

I shall direct what I have to say by St. Paul's words to *Timothy*, *Take heed unto thy self, and unto thy Doctrine.* Which tho' written to a Bishop, are as justly applicable to any who minister about holy things.

1 Tim. 4.  
16.

I. The first of which words, *Take heed unto thy self*, directs 1. To your Vertuous and Godly Conversation in general, as well, as 2. To your special duty of walking orderly in the House of God.

1. And reason good: Since a sober and good Life is so extreamly necessary for the Edification of your Flocks. For what an Awe and Reverence do we find an Upright Man to gain upon those that behold his Conversation! The shining Light of a Righteous Man so discovers the shamefulnes of the ways of Sinners; that they are confounded to see their own Filthiness, and from that time often commence true Penitents. Therefore St. Peter seems to take it for granted, that it was the sure and tryed way to win the Wicked to a Holy Life, by leading such a one themselves. *Abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul; having your conversation honest amongst the Gentiles. That whereas they speak*

1 Pet. 2. 12.

against



against you as evil doers; they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorifie God in the day of Visitation. According to the words of our blessed Saviour; Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in heaven. *Mat. 5. 12.*

And it stands to all Reason in the World that it should be so. For it puts Life into the Commandment, and makes Religion truly active; it raises it from the dead Letter to a living Sacrifice, and cloaths it through the sanctifying Spirit with the Beauty of Holiness.

Besides it is natural for them that are habituated to do Evil, to fancy it an impossible thing to observe the Law, they having never experienced the Practice, and their minds having been always alienated from the knowledge and understanding of it. In which opinion they would be mightily confirmed, should they find the Teachers of the Gospel not walking according to their own Rules. For they will then cheerfully conclude, that the Precepts of Holiness were given only for a Testimony of the Gospel Purity, and to hold forth the Perfection and Excellence of Gods Law: not in the least to oblige Men to the Observation of it. And they have this ready Answer to put off all such unsanctified Teachers, *Physician heal thy self.*

Tho' ye should lay Line upon Line, and Precept upon Precept: if you should not live up to your own Doctrine, there would be as small hopes

*Nonne flagitium est, te aliis consilium dare, Foris sapere, tibi non posse auxiliarier?*  
of Terent.

of Success, as of Gods Blessing. For, since all things turn by Providence, with what face can a sinner, a perlevering sinner, expect that either his Prayers should be heard, or his Endeavours prosper? For *the Lord is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.*

Prov. 15.  
29.

I leave it therefore to you, my Brethren, to consider with your selves, whether you find people in these days so meek, so gentle, so easie to be intreated; as not to need the best instructed and disposed Teachers, and the most artificial in that Guile, with which St. Paul tells the *Corinthians* he craftily caught them. And if ye do not meet with so tractable a Generation as may tempt you to be remils; I beseech you for your own sakes, and for theirs that are committed to your Charge, not to faint in well doing, since your Reward is certain. Especially since there is no surer a way to put to silence those that dissent from us; who are too apt to judge of the sincerity of our Doctrine from that of our Lives.

2 Cor. 12.  
16.

II. But this is not all your Task, to set an Example of a vertuous and sober Life. Ye have attained to a good degree, when ye get so far: yet if it be not attended with an orderly and conformable Behaviour; ye will be in danger of turning your Righteousness into Sin, by making it serve for a Cloak to Disorderliness and Schism, which are always attended with Uncharitableness, and for the most part with Confusion and every evil Work. For should ye live never so strictly up to the general

neral Rules of Morality; yet if ye submit not your selves to every ordinance of man for the Lords sake, ye are Transgressors of the Word, by breaking the Unity of the Spirit and the Bond of Peace: For it is a Duty of that Importance, I mean the Discipline of the Church, that if it should not be observed, it would be impossible to preserve Religion it self.

For Discipline consists of Decency and Order; which two concur as the Fashion of a Frame does with the Frame it self. The Word by which Order is expressed in Scripture, is used by the Inspired Writers sometimes in a confin'd Sense, and sometimes in a large one, When they use it in a confin'd Sense, they take it either for an appointed Time, or for degrees of Men, or for a set Course of performing any Office, or for the Constitution of the Office it self. When they take it in a large Sense, they mean the Rule by which the Church directs and governs her Members, and preserves Order within the Sanctuary; the discreet and modest Observation of which gives a Lustre to that Decency in which Order is constituted. And of the Word taken in this Sense ye have several Instances in Scripture, which at the same time let forth the Value of the thing it self. Let all things be done decently and in order. Joying and beholding your order. We exhort you Brethren, warn them that are unruly. Now we command you, Brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, withdraw your selves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received

1 Pet. 2.13.

1 Cor. 14.40.

Taxiō j hui.  
ga. Act. 12.21.Exg. 2. 20  
i. Cor. 15.23.Ev tō tūxi  
tis ionuelas  
autō. Luk. 1.8.Iqgus xī  
tlw tūxi  
Mel. Mod. 10.Heb. 5.6.6.20.  
7. 11. 6c.Vide etiam  
Canones Eccles.Universe à Ju-  
stello Edit. unā  
cum Notis ejusd.Kata tūxi.  
1. Cor. 14. 40.Tūxi tūxi  
Col. 2. 5.Ne distēte  
tis ataktos.  
1. Theff. 5. 14.Ataktos m-  
f. e. ataktos.  
2. Theff. 3. 6.

ἡ οὐκ ἠτακτῆ  
σαυτοὺς ἐν υμῶν.  
ibid. v. 7.

ἵνα τοῦ αὐτοῦ  
σοιζοῖν ὑμῶν.  
Phil. 3. 16.

of us. *We behaved not our selves disorderly among you.* For by all this ye see what weight the Apostle puts upon the Order or Discipline of the Church: The measure of which is expressed by the Word Canon, *Let us walk by the same Rule.*

There are two sorts of Proofs that are enough to convince any Man, that the Apostle had an eye, in a great measure at least, to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, when he made use of these words.

*First,* The first is from Reason, and that a Negative one, which is the great Mischiefs that attend a remiss Conformity, in You especially.

I. For it shakes the minds of your Flocks, and either encourages them to have an ill opinion of your Constitution, or at least to think very indifferently of it, and to observe it accordingly.

II. It affords great matter of Triumph to those that are without; when they find how little ye regard those very things, for the retention of which too often they are separated from you.

III. Whoever is guilty of this Neglect, and yet continues in the Communion of our Church, must needs expose himself to the Censure of all sorts of Men. For what can be imagined to induce him to this Disorderliness, but either that he is not satisfied in his own Mind to observe the Injunctions of the Church, and is therefore a Knave for undertaking to do that, which he thinks in Conscience he ought not to do: or that he fears to displease some People,

People, lest their Favour and Contributions should fail; whereby he becomes a *Traditor* in selling his Duty for a Morfel of Bread: And in both Cases he is a perjurd Person by breaking his Canonical Oath.

IV. But the certain effect of drawng several ways in our course of Worship, will be a coldness of Affection from the difference of Minds, and that soon improves into Strife and Contention. For when Men set their Hearts upon any thing that meets with Opposition, they are presently in a Flame, as not enduring to be thought in the Wrong. This is so evident through the whole Conversation of Mankind, that he must wink very hard that sees it not. What Heats, what Animosities, nay many times what Enmities, what Contentions, what Wars have ensued upon Differences in very Trifles! Now by how much the greater the Consequence is of the Matter in debate, so much the warmer prove the train of Passions raised upon it; and the more in earnest a Man is, the apter is he to be froward, especially if he get into a Wrong way: For, *Where James 3. 16. envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.*

Secondly, The Second Proof is from Authority; and such an Authority so clear and plain, that one would wonder how ever it could enter into the heart of Man, to question the Observation of an innocent Ceremony or Rite in Worship.

1. For



1. For the Holy Scripture is so clear in this Point, that even the Old Testament, which is made up of Types and Figures, Rites and Ceremonies, and of Gods own Appointment; yet admitted of Changes, Additions and Alterations: the Authority of which Practice, our Saviour himself confirms by his own Communion with them. The several Orders and Classes of the Priests and Levites appointed by the Kings of *Juda* continued till that day. The change of Posture in keeping the Passover was observed by him; and he honoured the Feast of Dedication, a new Feast, with his own Presence.

*Exod.* 12. 11.  
*Mat.* 26. 20.  
*1 Mac.* 4. 59.  
*John* 10. 22.

When the Shadows were vanished away and the Substance was come, then were Rites and Ceremonies no more a part of Religion; but only so far in use, as the necessity of Decency and Order required, in the Judgment of those who had the Rule over the Church; so that from a direct Obligation upon the Conscience, they became only relatively so. For now it is purely in obedience to our Superiours, and to avoid the scandal of Irregularity: and the duty of the Observation is no longer lived, than the Will of Man.

*1. Cor.* 14.  
40.

But if ye will do your Duty thoroughly, ye must do your diligence to keep your Flocks to the same Regularity ye observe your selves. And give me leave here to make a Moral Application of some Texts, which I have already made a critical use of. Ye know how frequently in other words *St. Paul* urges this Doctrine, *Let all things be done decently*



decently and in order. With what Earnestness! I beseech you, Brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same things, and that there be no divisions [Schisms] among you: but that ye be perfectly joyned together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For tho this cannot be observed in a Literal and Overt Sense: yet in a Moral one it may, by Silence and Forbearance for the sake of Peace and just deference to Authority. And to what an excellent End! If it be possible, as much as lyeth Rom. 12. 18. in you, live peaceably with all men. To the same purpose is that Exhortation to the Hebrews, Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. Cb. 10. 24. And that the Opportunity of doing this so necessary a Performance may not be lost, this Warning is given them in the next Words, Not forsaking the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is: but exhorting one another. And to prevent the counterfeit Pretence of Modesty in keeping back from the Congregation till a more perfect Knowledge be attained to, the Apostle St. Paul says, <sup>1</sup> Nevertheless whereunto we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. <sup>2</sup> For while one says, I am of Paul, another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? <sup>3</sup> Therefore I beseech you, Brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned. And

*To frequent the Holy Communion and other Church-Service: For your continued Assemblies overthrow the Powers of Satan, and render his fiery Darts ineffectual as to Sin; because your Unanimity and Concord in Faith, is destructive to him and grievous to all that fight under him.*

— μὲν οὖν δ' ἔπειρ τε νοήσῃ,

Ἀλλὰ τε οἱ βράσσων τε νότος, λεπτὰ δὲ τε μήτις. Hom. Il. κ.

<sup>1</sup>Phil. 3. 16.    <sup>2</sup>1 Cor. 3. 4.    <sup>3</sup>Rom. 16. 17.

**C**

why

*Rom. 16. 18.* why is he so earnest in giving caution against such Men? Because *such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies: and by fair words and soft speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.* And so Deceive them, as to draw them into Envy and Strife. For this the Apostle takes for granted to be the inevitable issue of Schism. For *whereas there is envying, and strife, and division among you —. For when one says, I am of Paul, another, I am of Apollos, &c.* And we know the constant Companions of Strife and Envyng.

*1 Cor. 3. 3.* For *There is confusion and every evil work.* But God is

*ver. 4.* *not the author of confusion.*

*Jam. 3. 16.* For *There is confusion and every evil work.* But God is

*1 Cor. 14. 33.* *not the author of confusion.*

I cannot tell that stronger Words may be given, either by Admonition or from Reason, than what are here alledged out of Scripture: tho' much more might be drawn from the same Fountain, at least as home to the same Purposes. For we see how carefully the Holy Spirit directs to Union and Unanimity; and with what severe Characters he stigmatizes the best of Pretences to the contrary: The specious colour of Edification, and a more holy Worship, is blown off with the plain Discovery of having Mens Persons in admiration, and the shameful minding of Earthly Things.

*Jude 16.*

*Phil. 3. 19.*

And yet lest neither Admonition nor Warning with evidence of Reason should prevail, St. Paul fortifies his Commands from the Example of his own Practice. *Now we command you, Brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every brother, that walketh disorderly; and not after the tradition which he received from us.* For your selves know

*2 Thes. 3. 6.*

*7.*

*ἀτάκτως*

know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not  
our selves disorderly among you.

<sup>2</sup> Οὐκ ἡμεῖς  
σαμῶς.

The word *Disorderly* in the Original is borrow-  
ed from the Military Discipline, as may be seen in  
the Martial Laws of *Athenians*: amongst which I can-  
not forbear to mention Three; because they do so ex-  
actly square with the Constitution of Ecclesiastical  
Affairs. For if we consider the Church as it is Mili-  
tant, the Laws need only be mentioned, to shew  
their fitness for either Discipline. The first puts a  
badge of Disgrace upon those that take the Professi-  
on upon them without being sent. The next pu-  
nishes those that break their Ranks, and do not ob-  
serve Order. In the same Law and under the same  
Penalties, are comprehended such as run away from  
their Colours and will serve in their Place no longer;  
but it may be, betake themselves to some other  
Calling; being mentioned under the Title of *De-*

*serters*. The third Law is against such as cast  
away their Arms and will not Labour in their Cal-  
ling. And Disorderliness seems to take in all the  
Faults: where the Law in general prescribes to all Be-  
haviour Good and Bad. Let those that have behaved  
themselves well be advanced, and the disorderly degraded.

Thus much I have said to demonstrate, that whilst  
we are in the Flesh, we must take such Measures  
as are best suited to our Infirmities, and which are  
so absolutely necessary to our Condition here be-  
low, that no Proposition in *Euclid* can be better  
made out. For all Vocations and Professions are  
Practised by some agreed and set Rules, which can-

<sup>1</sup> Ἐάν τις ἀσ-  
κίμαστος, — ἀσ-  
κίμων ᾖ. Petir.  
legg. Attic. l. 3.  
Tit. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Τὸν λιπόντα  
τὴν τάξιν, ἀ-  
πέχοντα ἀρχῆς,  
μητέρας ἀρχῆς,  
μὴτ' ἐπιστά-  
της τὰ ἑαγεῖ τὰ  
δημοτελῆ. ib.

Tit. 3. Such  
were called *Λει-  
ποτάξιοι*, their  
Action *Λειποτα-  
κτεῖν*, and their  
Crime *Λειποτα-  
ξία*.

<sup>3</sup> Τὸν ἀσεβ-  
τῶν ἀπεχ-  
σθαι. Dec.

<sup>4</sup> Τὸν τὰ ὅπλα  
ἀποβεβληκότα  
ἀπὸ πύλου ᾖ. ib.

<sup>5</sup> Πλασσομένην  
ἐν τοῖς τοῖς  
ἐκτάκτοις. ἡ-  
ρεσκεῖν ᾖ ἐν  
πῶς τοῦ ἀτα-  
κτεῖντος. ib.

Vid. Lyric  
Orat. xii. Ἀλ-  
κίμαστος.

not be Transgressed without hurt to the Constitution: and a great part of this consists in the Behaviour of such Members as make up the Corporation, who for this end ought every one to keep to his proper Station, and to mind his own Business and not anothers.

In Matters of Speculation we all agree in the common Rules for supporting the Truth of Propositions: and look upon it as a Jest, when any one goes about to question them. The Data in Geometry and the Propositions deduced from them, have remained uncontested, unless by some vain or wanton Scepticks, from their first Assertion to this day. Now I think the best Thought, why Moral Maxims and Proofs do not pass to current, has been; not that these are less evident in themselves, than those other: but they are engaged with the Affections and Interests of Men, which oftentimes stifle the most flaming and unquestionable Truths with the gross Mists of corrupt Prejudices.

After all, a Man may no doubt, and ought to withdraw himself from the Communion of a Church, which exacts a Consent to false and pernicious Doctrines, or a Compliance with unlawful Practices. But then he must be sure to go upon a good Bottom: and not out of a weak and crazy Humour make that Sinful, which is Indifferent; nor make the Faults of others an Occasion of his committing a greater by Separation. Ye know St. Paul's Opinion in the case of receiving the blessed Sacrament:

1 Cor. II.



ment: and let us see what was the Practice of the greatest and best Men in after-Times. \* By no means are we to quit the Unity of the Church for fear of Communion with wicked men. St. Cyprian was fully persuaded that the Church was under a great Mistake, and that it did grievously err in not Rebaptizing of Hereticks, which Opinion he pursued so far as to call a Provincial Council about it and there Establish

*Nulla modo esse propter Communionem malorum ab Ecclesiae unitate recedendum. August. de Bapt. contra Donat. l. 4. c. 12.*

it: and yet all this could not induce him to a Separation from the rest of the Churches. Ye are used, says St. Augustin to the Donatists, to urge Cyprian's Letters, Cyprian's Opinion, Cyprian's Council. Why do ye make use of Cyprian's Authority to justify your Schism, and reject his Example in preserving the peace of the Church?

*Nobis obijcere soletis Cypriani litteras, Cypriani sententiam, Cypriani concilium. Cur auctoritatem Cypriani pro vestro schismate assumitis, & ejus exemplum pro Ecclesiae pace respuitis. Ib. l. 2. c. 1.*

Nay he quotes his Authority as well as Practice. For, says he, when writing to Antoninus, he held forth to him, that by no means before the time of the last Separation of the Just and Unjust, are we to depart from the Unity of the Church by reason of mixt Communion, (whereby he shew'd what a Holy Man he was, and how most worthy the renown of that Martyrdom which he attained to:) He then says, What a swelling of Arrogance is it, what a forgetfulness of Humility and Gentleness, and how great a boasting of his Arrogance, that any one should dare or believe that he could do, what the Lord

*ani pro vestro schismate assumitis, & ejus exemplum pro Ecclesiae pace respuitis. Ib. l. 2. c. 1.*

*Cum n. ad Antoninum scribens, ostendis ante tempus ultime separationis justorum*

& iniquorum, nullo modo esse propter commixtionem malorum ab Ecclesiae unitate recedendum, ubi declarat quam sit sanctus, & illa quam meruit martyrii claritate dignissimus, ait, Quantus arrogantiae tumor est, quanta humilitatis & lenitatis oblivio, & arrogantiae suae quanta jactatio, ut quos audeat aut facere posse credat, quod nec Apostolis concessit Dominus, ut zizania à frumento putet se posse discernere, &c. Ib. l. 4. c. 12.

did

did not allow so much as to his Apostles, that he should think himself able to discern between the Tares and the Wheat.

Ye may see then, Brethren, what manner of Spirit they are of, who wittingly Promote the scandal of Schism. For a great \* Difference must be made between poor Simple Souls seduced, and them that pretend to Knowledge. These latter are those to whom St. Cyprian addresses himself: and who are so remote from the Meek and Lowly Temper of our blessed Lord, from that Humility upon which God bestows his Grace. Were we really cloathed with Humility, we should be Subject one to another: and not blow our selves up with Imaginary Reasons and Self pleasing Principles, to the subverting of the Churches Peace, for Things that are entirely in the disposal of Authority, being in themselves Indifferent. So that he must have a very strong Bias, let him make what Grimace he pleases, that can be Troublesome upon this account purely for Conscience sake. But ye have so full Discussions of this Point in Dr. Whiggit's Answer to an Admonition to the Parliament, and his Vindication of that Answer; Dr. Morton of the Three Ceremonies, and Dr. Burges his Vindication; and Cassander Anglicanus, written by Mr. Sprint, 1618. who had been formerly a Non-Conformist; that ye will find better and sounder Store in your Studies, than I can pretend to furnish you with. \* Only give me leave to quote to you one Passage, in an Account

\* Jude 22.

1 Pet. 5. 5.

\* The Church  
History of E-  
thiopia by  
Dr. Geddes.



Account of the *Habassm* Religion and Customs, composed by *Zaga Zaba*, the King of *Ethiopia's* Ambassador at *Lisbon*. We do observe nothing but what we find in the Law and the Prophets, and in the Books of the Symonds of the Apostles: or if any thing else is observed by us, it is done only for the sake of Order, and for the Peace of the Church, so as not to reckon it a Sin not to observe it; that is, simply in it self abstract from Scandal or perverse Intention.

II. And to your Doctrine. Which is the other part of the Charge; and is that *Depositum* which the Apostle so carefully minds him of. O Timothy, keep <sup>1 Tim. 6. 20.</sup> that which is committed to thy trust. Which Trust is not only generally agreed by Commentators to be the Doctrine of the Gospel; but is, I think, evidently so explain'd from the Words of the same Apostle to the same Person. The things that thou <sup>2 Tim. 2. 2.</sup> hast heard of us among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also: Now this is the Foundation of our whole Religion. For upon this we build our Faith, our Works and the whole Frame of our Righteousness. By the sound Expression of this we square all our Religious Thoughts and Actions: avoiding prophane and vain janglings, and opposition of Science falsely so called: *Ibid.* which some professing have erred concerning the Faith.

Our Office for Ordaining Priests takes a just and a wise course to prevent running after every Spirit, and taking up Doctrines upon too easie Terms; when it exacts this Promise of those that are to be Ordained:

Ordained: To teach nothing (as required of necessity to eternal Salvation) but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scripture. All other Writings derive their Authority from the Author's Veracity or Judgment: the former qualifies him for a good Witness, and the second for a good Judge; but yet so as to be Tryed by the Touchstone of the Holy Scripture. The four first General Councils have a particular Weight; 1. From the great Credit of those that sate in them; and 2. From the Universal Deference paid to them by all Churches in all Ages. Therefore our Constitutions give no Authority or Power to order, determine or adjudge any Matter or Cause to be Heresie, but only such as heretofore have been determined, ordered and adjudg'd to be Heresie, by the Authority of the Canonical Scripture, or by the first Four General Councils, or any of them; or by any other General Council, wherein the same have been declar'd Heresie, by the express and plain Words of the said Canonical Scripture; or such as hereafter shall be ordered, judged, or determined to be Heresie, by the High Court of Parliament of this Realm, with the Assent of the Clergy in their Convocation. By which Words ye see, 1. The sure Foundation our Church is built upon; the Holy Scripture, and what is Authoritatively delivered from it and agreeable to it: 2. The just Method for Establishing any Doctrine so delivered; not by the confus'd way of setting up private Spirits, but according to the Mind of that God who is the God of Peace, by submitting

1 Eliz. c. 1.  
§. 36.

*submitting to every ordinance of man for the Lords sake,*<sup>1 Pet. 2. 13.</sup>  
*whether it be to the King as Supreme, &c.* that is, by  
 the most Publick, General and Authentick Con-  
 sent that a Nation is capable of, which with us is  
 that of Parliament and Convocation. What had  
 the Apostles to justify St. Paul against the Com-  
 plaints of the Jews, but by convincing them, *that*  
*he walk'd orderly and kept the law.* *Act. 21. 24.*

However there is a Just and Decent Liberty due  
 to all Christians, whereby to Judge for themselves  
 in the Essentials of Religion. But yet such a Li-  
 berty it is, as is beset on each hand with most dan-  
 gerous Rocks; such as threaten Shipwrack to any  
 Vessel that shall Strike upon them. For if on the  
 one hand we run into that Popish Extreme, to take  
 away all Liberty by an absolutely blind Obedience  
 and implicate Faith, swallowing down all that is  
 given, without Tasting or Chewing upon it; we  
 act more like Beasts than Men, and as easily take  
 down Poyson as wholesom Food: but on the o-  
 ther hand, if with the Fanatick we assume to our  
 selves an unlimited Power of following the *Wild-  
 goose-Chase* of our wanton and uncertain Imaginati-  
 ons; we shall Tear the Church in Ten Thousand  
 Pieces, and expose it to all Uncharitableness. And  
 therefore a Sober Christian tempers all his Proceed-  
 ings with Modesty and Humility; and has that  
 discreet Jealousie of himself, as wherever he breaks  
 Communion, to do it upon so certain Grounds, that  
 the Grievousness of the Error imposed, or the Wick-

D

edness

edness of the Fact commanded, shall be Notoriously evident. Otherwise, in the Meekness of Wisdom, he defers to the Judgment of his Neighbours rather than to his own; and thinks himself in Modesty, in common Discretion, and in Duty bound for the sake of Peace, Unity and Concord, to submit to the Determination of his Superiours, especially in Authoritative Assemblies. *For in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.* And we have a Proverb which is deriv'd from its Authority, *He that is his own adviser has a fool to his counsellor.*

*Prov. 11. 14*

Indeed it is want either of Judgment or Honesty, that makes Men give in so much to their own Opinions, and so little to those of others. For it is certain the chief End of our being Conversable and Sociable Creatures was, that we might be Assisting one to another; and the more Important and Universal the Subject is, the greater regard ought to be had to its Determination. So that not only in Things Indifferent, where it is absolutely our Duty to submit; but much more in the Weightiest Matters of the Law, where our Eternal Welfare is so immediately concerned, we ought with the greatest Care and Caution to Proceed, and never think we can take too much Advice.

That Noted Mark of Catholick Truth, which *Vincentius Lirinensis* Prescribes, to Submit to that which has been believed in all places, at all times and by all, goes a great way with every Modest and truly Humble Christian. Because the Starting of Doubts

*Quod ubiq;  
quod semper,  
quod ab om-  
nibus credi-  
tum est. Ad-  
vers. Hares.  
cap. 3.*

Doubts and Questions so Confound the Apprehensions of Men oftentimes, that it is very hard for them to come to a Resolution of themselves. And in that Case there is no other way to come to the Acknowledgment of the Truth, but by a Prudent Deference to Authority. For we cannot well imagine it Consistent with the Divine Goodness and Wisdom, to suffer an Error so to Prevail, or rather to Reign so absolutely in his Church, as to bear these three Atchievements. I question whether ever any Heresie attained completely to any one of them.

St. Jerom ye know indeed says, \* *The World wondred* <sup>Ingenuit</sup> <sup>totus orbis, &</sup> <sup>Arianum se</sup> <sup>esse miratus</sup> <sup>est. Cont. Luciferan. tom.</sup> <sup>2. pag. 143.</sup> *to find it self become Arian.* But this Expression must be taken, as generally such are, by a Trope of the whole, for the greatest, or at least most Noisie Part.

For it is evident from all the Accounts given us of those Days, that there were many bore || Witnesses for the Truth even to the Death: and more would have done so, if their Courage would have served. <sup>|| Vid. Faustini & Marcell. libell.</sup>

Besides that [at all Times] was wanting. It <sup>precum ad Imperatores.</sup> was an Upstart Heresie, that lasted no longer than Supported by Force and Violence; which bears no great Analogy with Gods Methods in Propagating the Gospel. But Popery seems to lay the greatest Claim to this Character of Orthodoxy; and yet when thoroughly consider'd, the largest Part of it goes off in Pomp and Noise. For its Extent was confin'd within *Europe*, all the Churches in *Asia* and *Africa* disowning it: and there still remain'd in the height of their Triumph, Bodies of Men that



Opposed their Superstitions, and many of them with their Blood Sealed to the Truth: Besides, its Reign is not near of that Length it pretends to. The continual Attempts it made upon the Jurisdiction of other Churches and the aiming at Universality were long in agitation, and never yet settled to their mind farther than in *Italy*, and there next door it is rejected in *Sicily*. Its Pernicious Errours have generally been Disowned by their soundest Members, and by their greatest and ablest Writers, and few Established by Authority till the Council of *Trent* after the Reformation was begun; as you may see amongst others in our excellent Dr. *Field* of the Church. Yet these and all other Considerations, do not Captivate a good Christian so as to make him lay aside all his Reason: but in the midst of Miracles and the Power of the Holy Ghost, with the Noble *Bereans*, search the Scripture whether Things be so or no. How suddenly would our Schisms Vanish away, were some among us so Ingenuous, as to go to the Fountain-Head to Search the Scriptures; and not have Mens Persons so much in Admiration, as to take all for Gospel that they say.

As. 17. 11.

Ye see then the modest Cautiousness, which ought to be used to confirm us in the Truth: lest either by too much Implicitness we suffer Error to grow upon us; or by Assuming too much to our selves, we be Missed by our own Indiscretion. I shall refer my self in this Point, to what St. *Augustine*



fine says in a Treatise against the Donatists. "Who  
 "knows not, that the Holy Canonical Scriptures  
 "of the Old and New Testament, are contained  
 "within their certain Limits; and are so far Pre-  
 "ferr'd before all after-Writings of Bishops, that  
 "the Truth or Justice of whatever appears to be  
 "Written in them, is not to be doubted or call'd in  
 "question? But what Episcopal Determinations  
 "have been, or are made since the Canon of the  
 "Holy Scriptures has been confirm'd, may, if they  
 "appear Faulty, be Corrected, either by a Hand  
 "happily more Skilful, or by the Authority and  
 "Prudence of more Bishops and Wiser Men, or by  
 "Councils. And Councils themselves, which are  
 "held of particular Nations or Provinces, are, with-  
 "out more adoe, to yield to the Authority of Ple-  
 "nary and General Councils; and they likewise  
 "which have gone before, to submit to the Cor-

\* De Baptis-  
 mo contra Do-  
 natistas. t. 7.  
 l. 2. c. 3. Quis  
 nesciat sanctā  
 scripturam ca-  
 nonicam, tam  
 vet. quam N.  
 Testamenti,  
 certis suis ter-  
 minis contine-  
 ri, eamq; om-  
 nibus postero-  
 ribus Episco-  
 porum literis  
 ita præponi ut  
 de illā omnino  
 dubitari aut di-  
 sceptari non  
 possit, utrum  
 verum vel utr.  
 rectum sit,  
 quicquid in eā  
 scriptum esse  
 constiterit?  
 Episcoporum  
 autem literas,  
 quæ post con-  
 firmatum ca-  
 nonem vel scri-  
 ptæ sunt vel  
 scribuntur, &

per sermonem fontē sapientiam cuiuslibet in ea peritioris, & per aliorum Episcoporum gra-  
 viorem auctoritatem, doctiorumque prudentiam & per concilia licere reprehendi, si quid in eis  
 fortē à veritate deviatum est: Et ipsa concilia quæ per singulas regiones vel provincias fiunt,  
 plenariorum Conciliorum auctoritati, quæ sunt ex universo orbe Christiano, sine ulla ambagi-  
 bus cedere, ipsaque plenaria sæpe priora posterioribus emendari, cum aliquo experimento rerum  
 aperitur quod clausum erat, & cognoscitur quod latebat, sine ullo iypbo sacrilegia superbiæ, sine  
 ullā inflatā cervicē arrogantiae, sine ullā contentione livide invidiæ, cum sanctā humilitate,  
 cum pace Catholica, cum charitate Christianā. Et cap. 4. Quæ propter sanctus Cyprianus, tan-  
 to excellentior quanto humilior, quod documentum Petri sic amavit, ut diceret; documentum  
 scilicet nobis & concordie & patientiæ tribuens, ut non pertinaciter nostra amemus, sed quæ  
 aliquando à fratribus ex collegis nostris utiliter & salubriter suggerantur, si sint vera & legi-  
 tima, ipsa potius nostra ducamus. Satis ostendit facillimē se correcturum fuisse sententiam su-  
 am, siquis ei demonstraret baptismum Christi sic dari posse ab aīs qui foras exierunt, quemad-  
 modum amitti non potuit cum foras exirent: unde multa jam diximus, nec nosipsi talē aliquid  
 auderemus asserere, nisi univēse Ecclesiæ concordissimā auctoritate firmati: cui & ipse sine  
 dubio cederet, si jam illo tempore questionis huius veritas eliquata & declarata per plena-  
 rium concilium solidaretur.

"rection

“rection of the later, when any thing is discover’d  
 “which was not known before: and that without  
 “the least swelling of Pride, transport of Arrogance,  
 “or spiteful Contention; but with a Sanctify’d Hu-  
 “mility, in Catholick Peace and Christian Charity.  
 “Wherefore St. *Cyprian*, so much the Greater by be-  
 “ing the more Humble; and who was so in love  
 “with the Behaviour of St. *Peter*, that he said,  
 “setting it forth as an Instruction to us of Con-  
 “cord and Patience; that we should not be too  
 “fond of our own ways, but rather esteem those  
 “to be ours, if True and Just, which are now and  
 “then opportunely suggested to us by our Brethren  
 “and Colleagues. He shews plainly enough how  
 “easily he would have alter’d his Opinion, if any  
 “one had made it appear to him, that Christian  
 “Baptism might be Administred to others by  
 “those who left the Church for the same Reason,  
 “that they cannot lose their own by their Depar-  
 “ture. Of which though I have said much, I  
 “should not have dar’d to have utter’d one Word,  
 “unless I had been supported by the joynt Authority  
 “of the Universal Church; to which I make no  
 “doubt he had likewise yielded, if in his time  
 “the Question had been canvassed and decided by a  
 “plenary Council.

But though the Rule of Discretion and common  
 Prudence, taken from the natural Course of things,  
 direct this way; yet such is the headstrong Temper  
 of corrupt Nature, as will break through all. For

we

we see in the very Infancy of Christianity, when Mens outward Senses were Gratified with continual Miracles; their Minds taught by the Infallible Guides of the Church, the Apostles: Their Expectation and Dependance upon Things here below, prevented by incessant Persecutions and powerful Oppositions; yet would they not retain Sincerity and Innocence. For we see even in those Days, there was an *Hymeneus*, and an *Alexander*,<sup>1 Tim. 1. 20.</sup> and a *Diotrephes*, and divers others complain'd of<sup>2 Tim. 4. 10.</sup> by the Apostles themselves: there was the Heresie of the *Nicolaitans*, and that of the *Gnostics* too, if some have guess'd aright; which provok'd St. Peter to give this Warning, *There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction: And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of, &c.* And St. John thus counsels Christians upon the same Account; *Be- loved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false Prophets are gone out into the world.* No wonder then, if the Scripture advertises us of the Mischiefs which should happen to the Church in after-Days. Now the spirit speaks expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisie.<sup>1 Tim. 4. 1.</sup> But more emphatically have we it from the same hand, in the Charge given at *Miletus* to the Clergy of *Ephesus*. Take heed

Act. 20. 28 *beed unto your selves, and to all the flock over the which*  
 29. 30. *the holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church*  
*of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. For*  
*I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves*  
*enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your*  
*own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to*  
*draw away disciples after them. Which is confirmed*  
 Mat. 24. 11. *by the Mouth of Truth it self. Many false prophets*  
*shall rise, and shall deceive many. And that we may*  
*be apprised of the Reason, why it has seemed good*  
 I Cor. 11. 18. *to the Divine Wisdom to expose the Church to*  
 19. *these uneasie Tryals; we are told, I hear there are*  
*divisions among you. — There must be also heresies a-*  
*mong you, that they which are approved may be made*  
*manifest among you.*

Being thus forewarned of those Unnatural Di-  
 stractions, wherewith our Holy Profession is to be  
 Visited, and that in all probability they will continue  
 to the end of the World, because the Reason for  
 them does so: Ye ought always to be upon a strict  
 Guard against the Incroachment of so Dangerous an  
 Evil. For the Honour of God, the Support of  
 Truth, the Salvation of Mens Souls, and the Peace  
 of the Church are all concerned in it.

What is it preserves the Communion of so many  
 Churches, so widely distant in Place, Discipline and  
 Worship, but the Harmony of Confession, the  
 Consent in that which is the Life and Soul of our  
 Holy Religion, the Articles of our Faith? It is  
 our Creed alone that preserves the mutual Confidence  
 between

between Churches far and wide! For the Pursuit of which, we have Two infallible Directions.

1. *Hold fast the form of sound words.* —

2 Tim. 1. 13.

2. — *Rightly dividing the word of truth.*

— 2. 15.

I. From the first I suppose we are directed to keep to the Common Style of the Church, without, First, Addition; Secondly, Subtraction; or Thirdly, Variation.

First, The Papists are most notoriously Guilty of the first; notwithstanding that they generally hold all the Fundamentals, by superinducing so many false Articles of Faith, Idolatrous Worship, grievously Superstitious Practices, and setting up their own Laws under greater Penalties, if not above the very Law of God: thus shamefully Defiling his Worship, and with the Rubbish of their own Inventions, and the Doctrines of Men, Perverting and Smothering the Truth of the Gospel. *Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar.* *Vid. Symbol. Pii iv. annex. Concil. Trident.* Prov. 30. 6.

Secondly, They are likewise Guilty of a Sacrilegious Subtraction, by withdrawing the Cup of Blessing entirely from the Laity, and holding back the Word of Life, the Holy Scripture from the People, and deceitfully amusing them with Legends in its stead. But they whose great Business it has been to Narrow the Word of God, to Enervate the Power of Godliness, and to Destroy the Efficacy of Saving Faith, are the *Pelagians*, the *Socinians*, and their Harbingers. These do it with a witness, whilst they attack the Essential Foundations of our Hope, by

E                      denying



denying the Meritorious Purchase of Christs Death in our Redemption; the Imputation of his Righteousness, Seal'd to us by his Blood, and Confirm'd to us by his Resurrection for our Justification; shutting the Gates against the King of Glory and his Divine Majesty, disowning the inward Assistance and Comfort of the Holy Ghost, and the Blessed Effects of the Gospel Sacraments. To such as these had the Author to the *Hebrews* an eye, when he says,

*Heb. 10. 28* *He that despised Moses law died without mercy, under two*  
*29.* *or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose*  
*ye, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under*  
*foot the son of God, and has counted the blood of the cove-*  
*nant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and*  
*hath done despite to the spirit of grace?*

Now both to the Superstitious and Prophane, to him that would add, and to him that would take away hath God given this Charge; *What thing soever*  
*Deut. 12. 32.* *I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add*  
*thereto, nor diminish from it.* And this is St. John's  
*Rev. 22. 18.* *Witness in God's Name; I testify unto every man that*  
*19.* *heareth the prophesie of this book, if any man shall add un-*  
*to these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that*  
*are written in this booke: And if any man shall take away*  
*from the words of the booke of this prophesie, God shall take*  
*away his part out of the booke of life, &c.*

Thirdly, The Variation though in it self not so Malicious, is yet of dangerous Consequence. It may, I confess, proceed from a Luxuriant Fancy, and a Heedless Affectation. But there is a Fault even in this.



this. For it is an unmannerly Trespass upon our Governours and Superiours, to pretend to correct their Style, and in a Private Capacity to be wiser than the multitude of Counsellours. Besides the Confusion and Uncertainty it creates in the Apprehension of the Sense of Doctrines thus delivered. For every Art and Science, has its peculiar Terms and Expressions confin'd to one peculiar Sense and Meaning, so fixed by long Use and Experience; and if that be once passed by, and a Liberty taken by the several Professours, to use the Various Words and Loose Expressions of Common Conversation and Entertainment, or which may otherwise be the Original Propriety of the Language; all Points and Cases will become Unintelligible, through Ambiguities and Difference of Acceptation. Should we put *Cætus* for *Ecclesia* in the different Senses apply'd in our Ecclesiastical Style, what a Confusion would it make; the former being never otherwise understood than for a Company of Men met together, whereas the latter is extended to the utmost Meaning it can bear: For sometimes it is taken for the Material Church, sometimes for a Congregation; and that either of one Parish or Collectively of many, as the Church of *England*; or farther, for the whole Body of Christians throughout the World; or yet more extensively, for the Church Triumphant as well as Militant. Should we Change the *English* Word *Church* into any other Expression, what Work

would it make! For though it properly signifie the Material Edifice or Building, as being Deriv'd from the Greek Word *κωσανον*, yet by a most extended Metonymie, is it used in as large a Sense as *Eccllesia* in the Latin. Were *Comitia* apply'd instead of *Concilium*, how uncoothly and strangely would it, for want of Use, suit with the Epithets of Provincial, National, Patriarchal, Ecumenical, and the like. *Castalio* has Translated the Bible into a *Ciceronian* Style; but he is blamed for it by all who have weighed the Inconvenience of such a Novelty.

And yet there would not be so much Hurt in this, if the Mischief reached no farther than an Affect'd Singularity. But they who stop here, serve only for Blinds to give a more easie Introduction to Heresie. For under New and Unusual Terms, the Hereticks Equivocate their Meaning; and are contented to Manage the Simple-hearted in the best Manner they can, till they find a proper Season to speak out. Thus did the Hereticks of old, couch their Errors under Dubious Expressions and Colourable Words. So did the *Arians*, *Pelagius*, *Nestorius* and *Eutyches*; as may be seen in the Records of the Church.

II. I come now to the other Direction, *Rightly dividing the word of truth*. And I take this Translation of ours to come the fullest up to the Sense of the Original, of any in what Language soever. The Import of which Words I take to be,

ἀποδομιῶν

1. An Advice of Discretion, to Administer the Word according to the Capacity and Strength of the Hearer.

2. An Advice of Justice; to make known the whole Mind of God, concealing no Part, but giving to every Portion its due Weight.

I. In the first Sense, the Expression seems to have relation to the Distribution of a Sacrifice cut or divided into due Proportions. For we know the Body of the Church is likened to the Body Natural, which consists of several Members under different Dispositions according to their respective Uses. Therefore as in the Natural, so in the Politick Body there must be regard had to the different Office and Constitution of each Member. Some are more or less Honourable, some more or less Necessary, some more or less Powerful; each is to be Treated in that way which is most suitable to its Disposition; and if any Member be Sick or Weak, proper Remedies must be apply'd. And I am sure however it be Practised, it is one of the most necessary Duties incumbent upon our Calling.

The Truth of it is, where there is a Cure of Souls, by which a constant Attendance upon the Word in one certain Place is Required; nothing can more express the True and Earnest Concern for their Good, than a diligent Observation of what sort of Treatment, Gentle or Severe; or what sort of Diet may be most Proper for them, Milk or strong Meat. For that which is one Mans Meat may prove another

ther Mans Poyson. Men of sober and serious Spirits, well Exercised in Pious Meditations, may safely be Entertained with the stronger Meats; and Doctrines of high Speculations, and Myſteries may be Truſted with ſome of them: but ſuch Fare would make the Ordinary ſort of Mankind, who for want of Education or Leiſure are not uſed to ſuch Sublime Thoughts, run Mad and become Enthuſiaſts. It is therefore an unpardonable Imprudence in thoſe that Preach to their People at all Adventures. It is as if a Phyſician ſhould Preſcribe to his Patient the firſt Medicine that came into his Head, without Examining Diſeaſe or Temper; whereby it would be infinite Odds that he did more Hurt than Good.

What then ſhall we ſay to ſuch, as out of a baſe Awe of loſing either Favour or Profit, avoid declaring Uſeful and Neceſſary Truths? What ſhall we think of thoſe, who Amuſe People with Notional and Myſterious Doctrines, holding back ſuch Practical Duties as would keep the Conſcience awake; and all this to carry on Faction and Seditious Ends? No doubt an indifferent Perſon will ſay, they are of the number of thoſe that *handle the word of God deceitfully.*

II. Wherefore to avoid the Imputation, either of Heedleſneſs, or Corrupt and Sinifter Deſigns; as Faithful Stewards ye ought to Acquaint thoſe that are committed to your Charge with the whole Mind of God, leſt any thing be wanting to prevent Error or Miſtake. Another Method may rid our hands of ſome Work, but will certainly render our Labour  
very

very Defective if not Pernicious. The Church, which is the Body of Christ, is, ye know, compared to the Natural Body, which has its Members of different Value and Consideration; and as its Members, so have the several Rules and Directions of its Constitution their respective Weight and Importance: so that neither in the one Case nor in the other, is there a complete Body where any Part is wanting. Remember the fatal Case of *Ananias* and *Saphira*: For if for keeping back a Portion of Temporal Things, which Perish in the Usage, the Punishment was so Severe; of how much greater Infliction shall they be found Worthy, who withhold Spiritual Things, which are Eternal! In this Case therefore Comparison is very Odious, where the Value of the greater Articles of our Religion, are apply'd wholly to Eclipse the lesser: For to repeat our Saviour's Rule once more upon this Occasion, *These things ought ye to do, and not to leave the other undone.* Which makes it far more Wise to follow the Example of that great Apostle of the Gentiles, alledged in his Farewel Charge at Miletus, to the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus*, *I kept back nothing that was profitable to you. I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*

Act. 20. 20.  
vers. 27.

Thus are ye to Instruct the People committed to your Charge. 1. In the more weighty Matters of the Law, thereby to make sure the Foundation. 2. With more especial Earnestness in those Points, where ye find a Failure either through Ignorance or Prejudice. 3. And Lastly, in the whole Mind of God, that



that they may be Perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all Good Works.

2. As to the Practical part of Doctrine, one would think the suitableness of all Vertue to the whole Frame and Constitution of Gods Creation, would convince Men of the Reasonableness of it; and the Good it does from its very Nature not only to Particulars, but to the happy Support of the Whole, would make Men in love with it: And yet for all this, such is our Corruption and the Power of it, that neither the Light of Nature nor Instruction, Fear nor Favour, Interest nor Danger, can stop the Career of Sin, or turn the Sinner into the Right way. If Conscience cannot be Hardned, at least it shall be laid Asleep with deceitful Promises of Peace and Indulgence. Therefore ye ought earnestly to press the Practice of all Vertues in Holiness of Life: But this ye must be careful to do in such a Christian Style, as may not Offend the Gospel either,

*Eos, quos nunquam vidimus propter probitatem & virtutem quodammodo diligimus. Cic. de Amicitia.*

I. In coming short of its Precepts; or

II. In setting too great a Value upon the Practice of them.

First. For if you Narrow them to the private Dealings betwixt Man and Man, or the Sober Conduct of our own Persons; do we not see the Sons of Tumult and Sedition, in shew at least, justify the Duty of such a Behaviour? Neither the Moral Schemes of Philosophers, nor *Crellius's Ethicks* will furnish you with a sufficient Institution in this Matter: No. The Scripture instructs us moreover in those Noble and Generous

Generous Vertues, which bring our Actions nearer to the Likeness of that diffusive and universal Goodness of God, by such a Peaceable and Submissive Deportment, as makes the Wheels of Government go easie and whole Nations Happy.

Secondly. But yet we must not be so Lifted up, even with the Best of our Actions, as to bring them in Competition with the Grace of God, or impute any real Merit to them. Our Church, and the sound Writers of it Teach us, after we have done all we can, not to Value our own Righteousness, but that of Christ. And surely it would be a malapert Confidence in any of her Members, to Conceit themselves so much Wiser than Seven Men that can render a Reason, as to Lower the Attributes of God's Righteousness, for the Exaltation of our own Merits; and grudge his Grace a free Passage through the Means of our Salvation. There are therefore Three Rocks especially to be Avoided in the Consideration of our Practical Duty.

I. The First is that of *Antinomianism*; which casts off all Obligation to the Moral Law, and in the Teeth of St. Paul, abuses the Goodness of God in Derogation to his Holiness, by saying, *Let us continue in sin, that grace may abound.* Rom. 6. 1. And this we do not learn only from what is pass'd, but woful Experience teaches us every Day how much it has diffused it self through all our Sects, at least to some Degree; and they that pretend to be free from Sin, prove in effect to do it, that they may Sin the more freely.

F

II. There

II. There are that impose upon Practical Duty, and offer Indignity to the Divine Precepts. Some prefer their own Commandments before those of God; making it more Criminal to Disobey their own Laws than to break the Law of the Lord. Thus did the Pharisees of Old, Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. And just so do the Papists now; while they generally impose a greater Penance upon the Breach of their Canons, than upon a Sin directly against the Will of God. But whereas the Law is Fulfilled by Love, being made up of Peace, Gentleness and Concord: there is another sort of People who pervert the very Nature of it; and though not with so good a Heart as Moses, yet with as good a Will, break the Two Tables one against the other. Out of a pretended Zeal for one Duty they will Overthrow another; and expect that their Abhorring Idols will excuse their Sacrilege. But the Character of such Men is too obvious to deceive the Sincere; having been always found Unstable, Unquiet, Tumultuous, Seditious, Insolent and Disobedient to Superiours, False and Treacherous to their Neighbours, full of all Hypocrisy, Clamorous for Justice and Religion, and having neither.

III. Then there is the Proud Pelagian; who scorns to acknowledge his own Infirmities, and denying Original Sin, chuses rather to impute the filthy State he is in to Gods Workmanship than his own Folly. He Boasts out of Vanity, rather to be what he is not, by Establishing his own Righteousness,

ness, than submit to be a New Creature of God's Making:

These Desperate Diseases ye ought to Cure by your Moderation, and to continue earnestly to Preach up Good Works. For *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*: And tho it be the Holy Ghost that Sanctifieth, yet they must be Good Works, wrought by the Grace of God, that procure such Sanctification. So that ye are to urge to your People, the Necessity of Pleasing God by Good Works; but at the same time that they do not depend upon them, to assure them, that their Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord; but that likewise they humbly Confess, that it is God alone that gives the Increase.

Thirdly. It is of great Consequence, that ye press the Observation of the Two Sacraments, as well as their Power and Efficacy; they being so shamefully neglected and undervalued in these Days. For the generality of Religionaries lay them aside, out of a Contemptuous Conceit that they have no Worth in them; or at least not such as can add any thing to their Perfection. This was the Conceit of the *Cathari*, Condemned by the *African Church*; which probably was deriv'd from the *Montanists*, who might at least be some of those Animadverted upon by *Origen*; Περὶ εὐχαρ.  
§. 12. and has been the certain Effect of Spiritual Pride, as well as of Prophaness in all Ages.

But a truly humble Spirit will readily acknowledge, that the Wisdom of God is above all; and that what God has Consecrated by his Institution is to be obser-

ved with Reverence and Submission. A Man of just Sense and Reason will ask, what Familiarity or Communication our Gross Beings here upon Earth should have with Spiritual Things, were there not some visible *Medium*, in some manner to Qualifie and Reconcile the Invisible Operations of God to our Weak Understandings. I would have Men but to consider for what Reason Christ came in the Flesh, before they reject the Elementary part of the Sacraments, and so vainly despise an Outward and Visible Sign. *Naaman's Cure*, if duly consider'd, is likewise a pregnant Instance.

*Hab. 2. 17.*

I shall Conclude with Two Cautions; which tho already touch'd upon, I do presume again to lay before you: For I am perswaded, that the careful Observation of them will contribute much to the Establishment of Peace and Truth in our Church.

I. In your Sermons and other Discourses, ye ought to treat Men of different Perswasions with that prudent Charity as not to expose the Truth, and with that Christian Prudence in asserting the Truth as not to forget Charity. For to Preach universal Safety to all that live Soberly and Vertuously, without observing the Defectiveness of our best Obedience, and the Means we are to lay hold on for the Reparation of our Breaches; is to encourage all the Wild Opinions of Hereticks and afford a great cover for Hypocrisie: because it puts so gross a Sleight upon the Articles of our Faith, as to render them in a manner Ridiculous; and by Cloaking their Heresies with such a seemingly Meritorious Piety, puts a greater Value upon *Crellius's Ethicks* than upon



upon the Gospel. Therefore to affect such an unlimited Charity, does highly derogate from the Honour of God in our Redemption. As then ye must not Judge your Brother in pronouncing Damnation upon his Person, that is peculiar to God; so ye must and ought to Damn his pernicious Errors, lest ye be found Partakers of his Sins. Should ye see a Poor Honest Man wandring in untrodden Paths, whether were it more Charity to tell him he may get to his Journey's end well enough the Way he is in; or to let him know the Danger he runs of being lost, if he comes not into the right Way? By the first Method ye please Men in Humouring them in the Error of their Ways, by the other ye uphold the Truth of God: by the one way ye run Men upon a Rock, by the other bring them into a Safe Harbour. So that real Charity is to tell our Brother of his Mistakes, and not by Extenuation to flatter him into the hazard of his Ruin.

II. A careful Distinction should be observed in treating those that are in a wrong Way. If an Erring Brother be found Humble and of a Quiet Spirit, ye cannot be too Gentle towards such a one. For there must be a good Principle in him; however through Prejudice of Education, the Deceitfulness of Instructors or Weakness of Judgment he may be misled. Whereas a Turbulent Spirit that seeks to propagate his Follies though at the Cost of breaking the Peace both of Church and State, deserves to be handled in a brisker manner, with a Style sharp enough to pierce the Hardiness of his Temper. But whomever ye have to deal.

*Vi. l. Præfat.  
Job. Fox  
contra Oportum de Justificatione, &c.  
1 Tim. 5. 22.*

deal with in any Case of this Nature; Compassion ought to be the Ground of your whole Proceeding, that according to the Example of our Blessed Saviour, the end of all your Actions may be to do Good.

Let me therefore again conjure each of you in the Name of God, and in the Words of St. Paul to Timothy, *1 Tim. 4. 16. Take heed unto thy self, and unto thy doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt save thy self and them that hear thee.* And that God who is pleased to suffer you to be encompassed with so many Difficulties, grant you Courage to Resist, and the Power of his Grace to Overcome so many Contradictions of Sinners; and make you Diligent to continue Faithful in your Ministry, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## FINIS.

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## ERRATA.

**P**AGE 13. in Margin lin. penult. for *quos*, read *quis*. Page 18. lin. 23. and 24. for *with the greatest care and caution to proceed*, read *to proceed with the greatest care and caution.*

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